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ISSUE 93 | MARCH 2012

GRANT SUCCESS FOR THE LEYS

LEYS NEWS TEAM: (*left to right*) David Potter, director; Flora Waigumo-Pereira, volunteer; John Carlton, office manager; Trio Watson, volunteer; Janet Pavelin, volunteer.

COMMUNITY groups across the Leys are celebrating after being awarded thousands of pounds worth of grants to help continue their vital work.

The Credit Union, BLITZ IT Hub and the Leys Community Development Initiative were all winners following the announcement by Oxford City Council.

Leys News is also celebrating and making its own headlines this month, following the news that your community paper has been awarded a grant of £10,000.

John Charlton, Business Development Manager for Leys News said: "We are over the moon about this news and feel extremely privileged to have been awarded the full grant that we applied for. We are very grateful to Oxford City Council for their tremendous support and for supporting our vision for community newspapers in Oxford.

"This funding will help the business to grow, offer more training and volunteering opportunities to local people and help us to make your community newspaper even better. This really is great news for everyone. At a time when many charities and groups are having their grants cut, it is positive to see some community projects are still being supported."

The funding will be put to very good use and will enable Leys News to launch a Community Media Hub for Oxford. This means that other local areas that face similar social challenges to the Leys can be supported in their efforts to launch their own community newspapers.

Leys News Editor, Sarah Edwards, said: "We know that community newspapers work and bring people from diverse cultures together brilliantly. Leys News is a unique newspaper because as well as providing a professional publication for the local community that keeps them informed and is a vital resource, we focus a lot on the positive aspects of life on the Leys.

"Equally important are the training, work experience and volunteering opportunities that we are able to provide. Through our community journalism training programme; we are able to give people a real insight into what it is like to work on a newspaper.

"As well as producing Leys News, we are already helping teams in Barton, Rose Hill and Wood Farm to produce their newspapers and we hope that this funding will enable us to do even more."

POSITIVE IMPACT

Recent research has shown that community media projects have a positive impact on local areas.

John added: "The service we offer has many layers. From cost effective and flexible advertising packages for local businesses, to rich and varied editorial content and the training and volunteering packages, Leys News is a truly local business that does its best to support the entire community.

"This additional funding will secure the future of the newspaper and enable us to carry on with the good work that was started more than 12 years ago when Leys News launched."

Leys News was not the only lucky winner in this year's grant announcement, and other groups that receiving funding included The Archway Foundation, an organisation that supports individuals feeling isolated through disability, low income or health problems, and the Ark T Centre in Cowley received just over £8,000 to fund work with young people aged 11-23 years.

Blackbird Leys Credit Union received a grant of £10,000 towards the staffing costs of this vital service for the estate.

The Blackbird Leys Information Technology Zone (BLITZ) also received £5,000 to help offer free IT courses to local people in CV writing, completing job applications and preparing for work.

The Leys Community Development Initiative received £3,044 to help run low cost activities promoting a healthy lifestyle for Leys area residents aged 50 plus.

Community buildings open day

19 May. See page 3

Jump to it!

The Higher Energy Trampoline Club. Read all about them on the back page.

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Leys News

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Leys News is a not-for-profit business dedicated to providing news and information to the whole community. We are not affiliated to any political party, and we operate an equal opportunities policy. We encourage any resident to get involved in our work.

CONTACT

Address:
Leys News, 26 Kingfisher Green, Greater Leys, Oxford OX4 7BX

Phone:
01865 711756

Editor:
editor@leysnews.co.uk

Advertising:
advertising@leysnews.co.uk

Website:
www.leysnews.co.uk

WHO'S WHO

Board of Directors:
Sasha East (chair), Teresa Fieldwick, Marie Jones, David Potter, Alex Solaja

Editor:
Sarah Edwards
editor@leysnews.co.uk

Design:
Julian Dourado

Distribution Manager:
Lorraine Heritage

Office Manager:
John Charlton

Volunteers:
Janet Pavelin, Flora Waigumo-Pereirai, Trio Watson

Contributions by:
Ross Arrowsmith, Stuart Mabbutt, Natty Mark Samuels, Natalie Wallace, Alan Witton, Jane Yates

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Letter from the Editor

Hello!

SO...how was your half term? I can't quite believe that we are now heading for Easter and for many of us with teenagers...the dreaded GCSE exams. My eldest son was 16 last week (Happy Birthday Sam!) and has already taken some of his exams but there are more... many, many more to follow!

If anyone has any good tips out there that can try and instil some kind of revision discipline into teenagers then please do email me immediately because I am in serious danger of turning into a nagging mother at this rate!

Obviously you will see from the front page that we are all in a celebratory mood at Leys News having been the very lucky recipients of an Oxford City Council grant. At a time of austerity and grant cuts we couldn't be more delighted that the value and benefit of your community newspaper has been recognised and supported in this way.

The extra funding will help us in lots of ways and if you would like to join our team of volunteers, become a community journalist or just find out more about what we do, please get in touch.

Coming to the Leys in May will be a fantastic community open day event. This will involved more than 20 community groups across the Leys and will give everyone the chance to find out more about what happens in our community buildings. We are delighted to be supporting this day so look out for monthly updates in the run up to the event.

Have a great month
Best wishes

Sarah

Editorial Meetings

The next editorial meeting will be held on Tuesday 6 March at 10.30am at The Leys News office, 26 Kingfisher Green, Greater Leys

You are cordially invited to attend the

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of Leys News Limited

Wednesday 30 May, 7.00pm
at the Leys News office
26 Kingfisher Green, Greater Leys Oxford OX4 7BX

Light refreshments will be available

RSVP to the Office Manager on 01865 711756 or email officemanager@leysnews.co.uk

FAREWELL WINTER – HELLO SPRING!

AS the brighter evenings arrive and nature begins to awake, here on the Leys some exciting ideas are buzzing – your very own Community Market could open soon!

Want to travel less to buy your groceries, looking to buy fruit and veg at reasonable prices, or are you fed up with trolley rage in the supermarket? Well here's an opportunity to see life on the Leys grow and expand.

Local people are excited about starting the Leys Community Market, as a place to come once a week, for a browse around the stalls, enjoy a good cuppa, some homemade cake in the market cafe, to meet friends and make new ones, all on your doorstep!

This venture is the ideal place for budding entrepreneurs, who would like to sell their home made goods, it could be jars of chutney, home-made cakes, cards or soaps, possibly to use a skill, like hairdressing, a place to expand your horizons and build your business further.

Christine McDermott from the group said: "We're a very small group that wants to grow and we want to hear people's ideas and views? To share in this important stage we would like to invite people to come along to the next meeting on: Friday 16 March from 9.30 – 11.30am at the Dovecote at Greater Leys Green, next to the Farmhouse. We would love to meet people and hear about their ideas. We will also plan for the upcoming Open Community Buildings event on 19 May where we'll have a community interest and information stall. For the Leys Community Market to succeed local interest and input is vital."

For more information contact Christine McDermott: cmcd.uk@gmail.com or ring 07914395619.

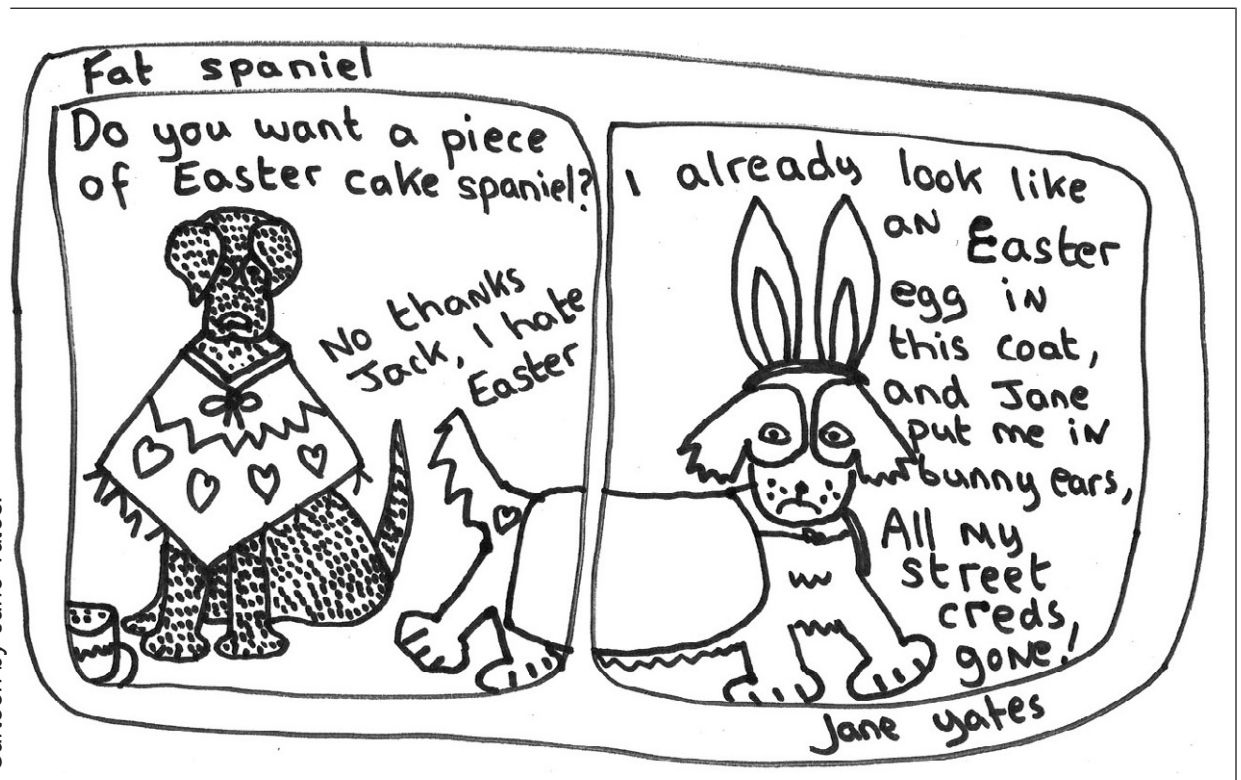
BLOGGER NEEDED!

ARE you a Blackbird Leys or Greater Leys resident and a keen blogger? Leys News is looking for a new member of our volunteer community journalism team to write a weekly blog about life on the Leys for our website.

We will Tweet the blog and post it on Facebook as well as featuring it on www.leysnews.co.uk so this is a great opportunity to air your views and write a regular column for us.

Writing a regular blog is great experience for anyone who may be considering a career in journalism, so get tapping on that keyboard!

If you are interested please email a 250 word blog entry about why you like living on the Leys to editor@leysnews.co.uk



Cartoon by Jane Yates.

Oxfordshire Unlimited

OXFORD UNLIMITED offers everyone the chance to make equality of opportunity a reality.

They work alongside Oxfordshire County Council to ensure that the needs of disabled people are known and considered, especially when it comes to the recent rounds of cuts.

For more information about what Oxford Unlimited can do for you call 0845 121 4112 or email gwynneth@glpedler.f9.co.uk

Website: www.oxfordshireunlimited.org

Celebrating on the Leys!

AN open day to celebrate the work of more than 20 community groups across the Leys will take place in May.

Ines Kretzschmar, Leys Housing Consortium Worker, said that the idea behind the open day is to let people know what goes on in the community buildings on the estate, and to encourage them to take part in the activities that are on offer.

She said: "Did you ever wonder what the Barn, the Clockhouse, the Dovecote and Kingfisher Green have in common? Do you know what is going on in these Greater Leys community buildings?

"Those great community buildings are owned and maintained by the Leys Housing Consortium (Catalyst, OCHA and A2D) for the benefit of the residents of the Leys Community, and 24 enthusiastic and hard working local groups and organisations work or meet in these buildings regularly. They offer lots of different activities during the day and in the evening for everyone on the Leys."

Ines added: "On Saturday, 19 May from 12noon–4 pm, the doors will be open for everyone at the first Leys Housing Consortium Community Buildings Open Day Celebration. Come and have a look around, meet the 24 groups, try out the many different activities for younger people, for older people, for singles, for families, for everyone. There will be lots of different stalls and refreshments too."

Leys News will be taking part in the open day, and more information and updates will follow in future issues of the paper so... watch this space!

Local Neighbourhood Police Team

TWO Acceptable Behaviour Contracts have been signed with two youths who were reported as being anti-social around the Ozone Complex and Kassam Stadium. These youths have now been banned from these areas along with their groups of friends.

A 22-year-old man from Oxford has been issued with an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO), after being convicted for possessing an offensive weapon last year.

Kyan McFarlane, from Emperor Gardens, Blackbird Leys, was issued with a two-year ASBO at Oxford Crown Court in January.

The ASBO application was made by Thames Valley Police and Oxford City Council after McFarlane was convicted of possession of a knife and knuckle dusters, for which he is currently serving a sentence of ten months. The ASBO will begin on 19 May, which is the day McFarlane is released from prison.

The ASBO prohibits McFarlane from: In Oxfordshire, carrying any knife or bladed article, including a folding pocket knife with a blade less than three inches in length in any public place; Entering or remaining in the Kassam Stadium and associated car parks; Spitting at anyone in Oxfordshire.

Thames Valley Police, in partnership with Oxford City Council, are committed to supporting communities through dealing effectively with these types of offenders, This order continues our drive to deal robustly with anti-social and violent criminal behaviour.

CANNABIS

In January the team carried out a substantial warrant execution where a cannabis factory was found and over 100 plants were seized. Further enquiries led to a large amount of Class 'A' crack cocaine, small amounts of other Class 'A' and Class 'B' being seized. This was a magnificent effort by the team and along with some very good information from members of the community.

SAFE PARKING

The team would like to reiterate the importance of safe parking around our local schools. There are zig zag lines that are painted on the road to protect pedestrians, especially the children. If the zig-zags are obstructed by parked vehicles then pedestrians cannot get a clear view along the road. Parking on these lines and along the pavements is illegal and puts children and other pedestrians at risk. We ask that anyone who uses a vehicle to collect their child from school to please park legally, safely and considerately.

Parents of school children will need to be mindful that in February there will be building work going on at Windale School and this will mean that there will be no parking space available outside the school gates, so we urge that those who drive children to school find appropriate places to park and not to cause obstruction for other road users and pedestrians.

VANDALISM

As stated last month and reported in the local news the team is looking for any information on the recent spate of wing mirror damage. PCSOs have carried out extensive patrols of the areas but to date there have been no witnesses to these damages. If you do have any information please contact the team.

NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTION GROUPS

A Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG) is a multi-agency problem-solving body. If you would like to find out more about your local NAG please visit: www.uknags.org.uk

HAVE YOUR SAY

February's 'Have Your Say' meeting is on 29 February between 7pm and 8 pm at the Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre, Pegasus Road. Please come along to discuss any issues you may have, it is a great opportunity for our community to find us in a location where the time is there for them to utilise and most importantly meet members of the team.

NEW TEAM MEMBER

The Blackbird and Greater Leys Police Team has been joined by PC Neil PUGH who has joined from the Priority Crime Team and is looking forward to working within this great community. With his knowledge and experience Neil will be a great asset to the team and to our community, so please do say hello to Neil if you see him out on his patrols.

THAMES VALLEY POLICE

CONTACT

If you want any advice or would like to contact the neighbourhood team you can call us on the police non emergency number 101 but if your call is an emergency then dial 999.

You can also contact us via email:
Leysneighbourhood@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk
- please note this email address cannot be used to contact Thames Valley Police to report crimes or for any urgent matters.

If you have information about crime or Anti Social Behaviour in your area but you do not want to speak to the police, please call the Crimestoppers charity on 0800 555111.

To view information on your neighbourhood team you can visit the force website at: www.thamesvalley.police.uk

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WOMAN FINED FOR BENEFIT FRAUD

A 46-year-old woman has been fined £1000 after pleading guilty to benefit fraud after claiming over £11,000 in benefits.

Miss Mandy Rowland pleaded guilty to dishonestly obtaining Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit and Jobseekers Allowance.

Miss Rowland, of Long Ground, Blackbird Leys, Oxford, was charged with dishonestly making false statements to Oxford City Council and the Department for Work and Pensions and dishonestly failing to declare a change of circumstances relating to Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit and Jobseekers Allowance between June 2008 and September 2010.

She stole a total of £11, 445.78 and was sentenced at Oxford Magistrates Court on Friday 10 February. She was sentenced to pay a fine of £1000 and ordered to pay £50 costs.

She will have to pay back the overpaid benefit to both Oxford City Council and the Department for Work and Pensions.

If you have concerns that a person you know is claiming benefits when they shouldn't please contact the Oxford City Council Benefit Fraud line on 01865 252222, email benefitfraudline@oxford.gov.uk or complete to benefit fraud 'Report it' form on the Council's website: www.oxford.gov.uk

Amazing community spirit helps BLAP back on its feet

OFFERS of help have flooded in following an appeal by the Blackbird Leys Adventure Playground for volunteers to help re-launch the play facility.

Sue Price, committee secretary, said: "Many local people have been offering their help. Some have been offering practical help and others want to train to help run the after school club and summer play scheme. The first 15 will now be receiving their initial training in play courtesy of Oxfordshire Play Association. Johnson Buildbase is also showing how generous local firms can be. They are providing the wood needed to ensure the play structures are safe."

The refurbishment of BLAP is well underway. Students from OCVC have helped tidy the inside, and thanks to Thames Valley Probation Trust and offenders sentenced to Community Payback the inside now looks bright and cheerful and the pathways and landing areas dug by the payback team will be filled with woodchip provided by the City Parks Department

Sue added: "Because the building had been closed for two years it was not surprising to find the gas boilers were of no use. BLAP has little spare cash for such big expenditure, but Valiant Plumbing has come to the rescue. Tom Durkin at Valiant said: "It is good to put something back into the community and help in this way". Gary Oates has been installing the new boiler and the firm has provided the labour free of charge.

If you would like to get involved with the refurbishment programme, please contact Mrs Sue Price, Secretary to Blackbird Leys Adventure Playground Management Committee. 190 Pegasus Rd Blackbird Leys Oxford OX4 6SY Phone 01865 429036 or 07773848998

OXFORDSHIRE MIND

WANTED!

OXFORDSHIRE Mind fundraising volunteers are planning to make homemade craft items to sell at future fundraising events and need donations of materials to get the project under way.

Nicky Clargo from Oxfordshire Mind said: "We are also looking for wicker baskets to make up hampers for our charity raffles."

The following items are urgently needed: material, lace, ribbon, buttons, beads, pearl beads, jewellery, cotton blend plain fabric (any colour), cotton blend small floral print fabric (old blouses can also be used), wicker baskets, wooden hearts, wreaths, old gift cards, white old fashioned headrests or embroidered items, cotton doilies, good quality cushion stuffing (no pillows thank you), cord such as old curtain tie backs, crochet trim, felt, new candles, fir cones, good quality large or small gift boxes, artificial holly, ivy and other foliage.

Nicky added: "We have projects all across Oxfordshire where items can be dropped off including, Botley, Oxford, Witney, Carterton, Chipping Norton, Kidlington, Bicester, Banbury, Abingdon, Thame, Wallingford, Wantage, Henley, Didcot. To offer your support please contact Nicky Clargo on 01865 263733 or email nicky.clargo@oxfordshire-mind.org.uk

For more information about Oxfordshire Mind please visit www.oxfordshire-mind.org.uk

GREEN FINGERS

By Stuart Mabbutt

A helping hand for starlings

THE noisy, once common Starling has declined by half in recent years.

Eating insects in spring, fruits and seeds in winter and being intelligent birds they respond quickly if we feed them. Nesting in holes in trees, sheds and buildings, it pays for us to not be too quick with the DIY and make these repairs.

They also roost communally in conifers, which often are in our gardens so don't be too hasty when removing them.

These birds feed within half a mile of their nests, and they catch insects to feed their young. Some of the insects they require need short, medium and long grass to complete their lifecycles, and need a patch of long grass left uncut all winter so they can hibernate. Keeping the grass in your garden at different lengths will help provide a wide range of insects for numerous birds. A close mown patch is important for wildlife too as that's where the insect larvae often are.

To have Starlings nesting in your garden, place a nest box 12 feet up a mature tree or behind the facia and soffits or under the eaves of your house.

Starlings may have been common but we could still lose them.

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mail@leysnews.co.uk | phone: 01865 711756

Oxford City Council needs you!

ARE you an Oxford City Council tenant or leaseholder? If you are, the city council needs you to test and help to improve its services by becoming a mystery shopper.

A mystery shopper pretends to have a common query, for example requesting rent information. They then record the customer service they received from the council by filling out a form. Anyone who takes part will receive free training and support, and there is the chance that participants might be able to get a job as lots of high street shops need mystery shoppers.

A team from the city council will be visiting the Blackbird Leys Community Centre on Wednesday 28 March, from 10-12am, to run a short taster session for anyone who would like to try mystery shopping before signing up for the project. It will be very informal with tea, coffee and biscuits available.

If you are interested or for more information contact the Communities and Neighbourhoods Team on 01865 252791 or emailcommunities@oxford.gov.uk.

HAND PRINTING WORKSHOPS

THE Bodleian Hand Printing Workshop at The Story Museum is launching a spring programme of hands-on sessions for both families and adults. Visitors will learn about the history and techniques of letterpress printing, hand set a short text and print it as a keepsake.

For further information ring 01865 790050 or email eka@storymuseum.org.uk

NEW PLAY AREA FOR FLORENCE PARK

WORK has started on transforming an old disused bowls green at Florence Park in Oxford into a brand new children's play area.

The work, which started just after Christmas, is one of the last parks to be worked on under Oxford City Council's £3.1m play area refurbishment programme.

The scheme will cost approximately £150,000 and is expected to be completed by the end of March.

Need help giving up smoking?

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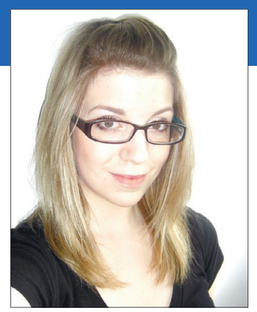
Oxfordshire Smoking Advice Service
Supporting people through the process of quitting

NHS

SMOKEFREE

Fashion on the Leys with Natalie Wallace

Cash-strapped and the Catwalk



VICTORIA Beckham has recently launched Victoria by Victoria Beckham for the first time. With each dress costing between £300 and £600, the little sister line is a cheaper alternative (ahem) to her main collection (which would set you back upwards of £1000 for one dress). Luckily for us mere mortals, clever George at ASDA are hot on VB's ever-so stylish heels with this little gem (*left*). At just £16, the dress is a steal. Better still, it's in stores now. It's cutesy, sixties, summer style for all.

Smart Shopper

Take one dress and one jacket. Style them up or down, for day or night...and hey presto, two outfits for any occasion. Here's how.

The main players:

A floral dress will be one of this summer's wardrobe staples (*bottom middle*). This M&S Limited Collection is perfect for mixing looks with its muted tones and perfect balance of neck and hem-line. Floral patterns have been in style every season, in one form or another, for the last couple of years so a dress like this is worth investing in. You will get wear out of it for seasons to come.

Every well-dressed woman should have a black blazer hanging up at home. It will go with everything and give the most casual outfits a smart and sophisticated edge. Primark have them for £25.

Down-time, work-time, anytime!

During the day, especially at work, a shorter hem-line calls for a smaller heel or flat shoe. These slipper-style flats are a bargain at £18 from boohoo.com and will last you all spring and summer (*bottom left*).

Pastel colours will soon be all over the high street, so it's well worth getting stocked up on new season accessories which will update your look instantly and save having to invest in a whole new wardrobe. Scarves are a great way to do this, particularly when it's still cold outside. Be adventurous and clash patterns.

This will work if you chose clothes and accessories in similar or complimentary colours. Keep out the winter chill with thick opaque tights. If you're feeling brave pick a colour from the dress to match the tights to, otherwise neutral grey or beige would work too. Pamela Mann (pamelamann.co.uk) has great designs under £9. Top the look off with a lady-like handbag or tote, big enough to carry all your day-time essentials (bottom right). (£12 from Primark).

Party time, date time, play time

A silky sheen on a jacket works just as well for dressing up for a night out, at least until its warm enough to bare your arms.

Make your jewellery a bold statement, anything that glistens is perfect. This bracelet with round crystal balls is around £20 from my987wardrobe.com but ASOS.com does some fantastic chandelier earrings which would tick all the boxes. Grab a small clutch and with a slick of bright lip-gloss you are good to go. Check out Sainsbury's Tu range for accessories and the body shop for lip gloss.

80% of the waste we throw away could be recycled or composted. Do you know everything that can be recycled or composted?

www.oxford.gov.uk OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

For more information please log onto www.oxford.gov.uk/recycling or call 01865 249811

recycle for Oxford

Leys Children's Centre

Courses and Activities for March 2012
Childcare is available for all courses and activities

Knitting group
every other Monday
– next session Monday 5 March 1.30 pm – 3.00 pm

Signing course
Thursday 9.30am – 11.30am

HENRY (Health, Exercise and Nutrition for the Really Young) course starts Wednesday 29 February 9.30 am – 12.00 pm
limited crèche places available

Asian Women's Group
Thursday 1.00pm – 2.30pm

Helping Your Child with Maths
starts 27 February1.00 pm – 3.00 pm

COMING SOON!
- Cooking courses
- Healthy Eating and Nutrition
- ESOL for beginners

....And many other activities, courses and Stay and Play sessions
– come and see us soon
– everyone welcome!

For more information please call 01865 773263

www.theleyschildrenscentre.org

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Welsh memories and a move to Oxford

Leys News Community Journalist **Jane Yates** shares her story of how she came to live in Oxford.

OXFORD has such a wide mix of people, it is one of the things I love most about living here. I used to live in a council estate in west Wales; well I say council estate, it was a row of six council houses on a hill. It was called, 'Coed Y Bryn', which means, trees on the hill and there were trees too when I arrived, until they got felled one winter.

It was very quiet and the house was surrounded by fields full of fat sleepy sheep. However there was the occasional jet aeroplane, which used our row of houses for pretend bomb practice and would swoop out of nowhere on a clear day, engines roaring like thunder, dropping so low it would make your tea vibrate in the cup.

It was a strange village to live in, not very friendly, full of gossip, people were always very interested in what you were doing, I found it was best just to tell them. You could see no one for days, but the moment you sat out in the garden a tuneful voice from either side would say, 'sitting out in the garden are we?' Being a townie, I never quite got used to that.

In Coed Y Bryn there was a village shop which held secret opening times. The lady who ran it, did not like running the post office part of the shop, but had to open sixteen and a half hours a week to qualify to get the money from the post office for running it. So she opened at odd times and it was always different. Once I went to collect my child benefit and she said she needed two week's notice for collection of that.

It was an odd shop, it stocked one of each item, and the lady who ran it really used it as her store cupboard and objected if you bought too much. I was married then, to a man of Welsh descent, which was the reason we had moved there in the first place. He called in the shop to buy a can of tuna one day and the lady sold it to him rather reluctantly as she muttered under her breath, she was going to have it for her tea.

Most the people in the village spoke Welsh as their first language and many of them had the surnames Jones, Williams or Davis and were related to each other in some form or other. So if by mistake you upset one of them, you found you had upset half the village!

My children all spoke Welsh as they went to school there. I tried but found it impossible, I only managed to pronounce things right if I had a good cold first. The lady in the village shop thought it was hilarious and dug out her mother from the front parlour to stand and watch me while I tried to say 'torth o fara os gwelwch yn dda' which is, 'loaf of bread please'. The ladies would get me to repeat it again and again, then burst into fits of giggles, so much so that I think the mother almost wet herself!

Although most the time I felt living in Wales was like being buried alive, I do have some happy memories from my fourteen year stay there, the night skies were beautiful, and most importantly, not all the villagers where unfriendly to 'y Saesneg', (the English), there was a lovely man called Di, who had been in the war and told amazing stories about his life and also his long term friend called Iris who lived next door and who still sends us a Christmas card and five pounds every year.

YOUR ROUND. A painting of two old Welsh men by Jane Yates

The village fete was the highlight of the year and there were races and cakes and fancy dress. I always remember it being sunny on those days, although it probably was not, it did rain a lot in west Wales and also there was a constant breeze. I suppose we got used to it, after a while we became weathered and our town folk edges where warn off.

I was lucky and found a family who wanted to move to Coed Y Bryn from Oxford, I suppose being seven miles from the sea helped a bit, so we exchanged our council houses, which is far easier than you might think. In those days there was a big book in the rent office with all the names of people who want to move listed in it, which was presided over by two stern plump ladies, but now it's even easier as it's all online. In fact I am in the process of council house exchanging again, right now and moving from west Oxford back to east Oxford.

So how did you end up in Oxford? Send your story to editor@leysnews.co.uk and let us know.

CRAFT CORNER

with Jane Yates

Card making

EASTER is just around the corner and is one of my favourite times of year as there are all those chocolate eggs! However you can end up with too much chocolate, (I never thought I would write that!). Trying to find a nice alternative for just a couple of pounds can be a struggle so a nice thoughtful gift can be to give a homemade card.

There is not much skill required and you can make each card individual by adding names or a personal message.

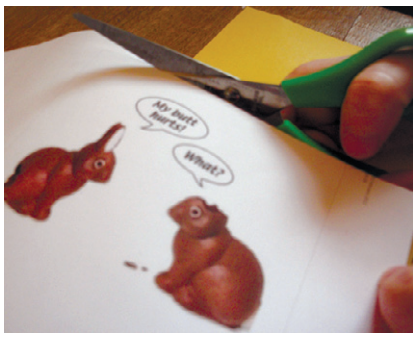
For these cards I printed out jokes and flowers from the internet. Just type in, 'Easter jokes', in the search box on the Google images page.

Also I brought yellow card, feathers and blue blank cards from The Works shop, which cost a total of £3.97. You will also need some glue and sticky tape.

METHOD

Cut out images that you have printed of the internet, leaving a white border around the edge. Cut out the yellow card a bit larger than the image and stick together.

Turn the card over and stick some feathers around the edges. Glue onto the blank card and then add any text you wish.



LITERARY EXHIBITION

A LITERARY exhibition will be held at the Blackbird Leys Library from Thursday 1 March to Thursday 15 March. It will feature mainly reviews and lyrics, and some of the pieces have been written as part of an arts qualification that writers are working towards.

Oxford International Women's Festival

Reclaim the Moonlight

AS part of the Oxford International Women's Festival, there will be a women's evening river walk on 6 March.

Walkers should meet at Oxford Town Hall at 6pm and the walk will finish at Grove House, off Iffley Road at 8.30pm.

This walk by the river in the early evening has been organised to experience the freedom that is often denied to women because it seems dangerous.

Contact Clare on 07761702156 or email rtn.oxford@gmail.com to book a free place.

OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITY

Thanks to Oxford Brookes University for sponsoring this page. If you are interested in studying at Oxford Brookes please call Sobia Afridi on 01865 484886

Leys Learning

RED CARPET FOR RUSKIN

STAFF and students at Ruskin College are celebrating after winning a prestigious, national Association of Colleges (AoC), Beacon Award for Widening Participation to Life Long Learning which is the equivalent to winning a much coveted Oscar in the film industry.

In a ceremony at Westminster, Ruskin's Principal, Professor Audrey Mullender was presented with the award along with a cheque for £5,000 by John Hayes MP, Minister for Further Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning.

The award sponsored by Pearson UK, was given to Ruskin in recognition of effective and imaginative teaching approaches to attract and motivate adult learners which resulted in a successful acquisition of skills or qualifications.

The College has worked tirelessly with four local key partners in delivering their outreach programmes to date including: The Ley Community in Oxford; Aspire in Oxford; Crisis Skylight in London; Eaves Housing in London; and the Florence Park Children's Centre in Oxford.

Students from Ruskin have found that studying at the college is exciting and challenging and they have often excelled at subjects that they struggled with at school.

Ruskin College believes in giving adults a second chance in education and the desire to learn and succeed is the most important entry requirement. The College welcomes students who not only want to develop themselves but also want to put something back into society.

Ruskin prides itself on having small tutorial groups and a high staff-to-student ratio with plenty of one-to-one support time, all of which results in exceptionally high levels of student satisfaction.

Ruskin offers courses in a range of subjects from Activism and Campaigning, English Studies and Creative Writing to Law, Youth and Community Work and Social Sciences

News from BLITZ

IT courses still FREE with Blitz!

Would you like to improve your IT skills? Would you like to improve your work prospects?
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Enrol NOW for our March courses...

- **BEGINNERS**
Informal twelve week courses for adults with little or no computer knowledge.

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Understanding your computer in the home and work environment. First line support, hardware, software, file management, trouble shooting, upgrades. *(You will require some basic IT skills to access this course)*

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- **CV WRITING, UPDATING YOUR CV AND INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES**
Monday mornings *(by appointment)*

- **SILVER SURFERS: You are never too old!**
We offer free beginner computer lessons for our older community.

DROP IN TIMES:
(FREE access to the internet for all adults)

Monday	12.30 – 3.00 pm
Tuesday	12.30 – 3.00 pm
Friday	12.30 – 3.00 pm

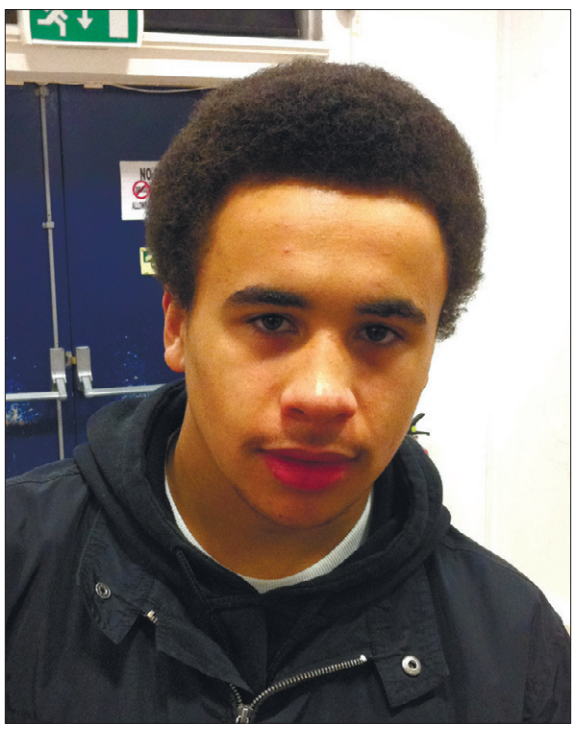
Do you want to help your community?
BLITZ is currently looking for voluntary teaching assistants with basic IT skills

For more information call 01865 714492

Blackbird Leys IT Hub
Leys Linx Centre, Blackbird Leys Community Centre

A Talk with Zacc

By Natty Mark Samuels



CONFESSING my low aptitude for the mysteries of mathematics, I'm always impressed by those who have a passion for it. One such person is Zacchaeus Hyde-Thomas, also known as Zacc. Where I get tangled up in logarithms, he has the knowhow, to unravel all the enigmas.

With this capacity for numbers and formulas, he is taking A' Levels in Economics and Maths, as well as a BTEC in Sports. After his sixth form time at the Oxford Spires Academy, he hopes to study to be an accountant.

During a recent conversation with him, it was thrilling to hear him express a certain desire; that following the qualification award and relevant experience, he would like to put a few hours aside each week to use his expertise to help a local project by helping with the annual budgeting and the bids for funding. Or in the educational area giving much needed numeracy support.

It warms the heart when young people make positive decisions about their neighbourhood, as well as themselves, so it was really uplifting to talk with Zacc the other day and listen to his dreams, and his confident stride towards them.

Brookes steps up to raise aspiration

MORE than 200 students flocked to Oxford Brookes University to take part in the Step-up event to raise aspiration for young people of African, Caribbean and Asian descent.

Students in years 10, 11 and 12 from a variety of schools attended, including Oxford Spires Academy and Stantonbury Campus from Milton Keynes.

The university ran a variety of workshops in subjects ranging from overcoming cultural barriers to crime scene investigation, and nearly all the workshops were oversubscribed.

A university spokesman said: "We had some inspirational guest speakers. We were very fortunate to have Nelufar Hedayat who has done many documentaries including The Truth about Child Brides that was broadcast on BBC Three. The second guest speaker was Dr Augustus Casley-Hayford. He was recently on BBC4 on Lost Kingdoms of Africa."

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www.ruskin.ac.uk

Ruskin College
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Oxford
OX1 2HE

For more information about all courses at Ruskin contact:
Tel: 01865 759600 Email: enquiries@ruskin.ac.uk

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Ruskin College is approved by The Open University as an appropriate organisation to offer higher education programmes leading to Open University validated awards.

Your local representatives

Parish Council

Chairman: Gordon Roper;
Vice Chair: Brian Lester;
Non-position holders: Tanya Prescott, Chris Hatton, Cyril Martin, Mrs Ann Booker, Mrs Sheila Smith, Pat Stannard, Rae Humberstone (*see City Council section below*)

For further details telephone 01865 716943 during office hours of 9am–5pm, Monday to Friday. Send mail to Parish Council, 13 Bailey Road, Oxford, OX4 3HU.

Also check leysonline.net to find out about Parish Council Meetings.

Oxford City Council

Blackbird Leys Ward

Val Smith – *Labour*
4 Flaxfield Road, OX4 6QD
☎ 07767 446051
valsmith@gmail.com
or cllrvsmith@oxford.gov.uk
(*her city councillor entry)*

Rae Humberstone – *Labour*
75 Little Bury, Blackbird Leys
☎ 01865 779678
cllrhumberstone@oxford.gov.uks

Val Smith and Rae Humberstone will be doing street surgeries every other week. They can also visit people in their homes – ring or email to make arrangements.

Northfield Brook Ward

Stuart Craft – *Independent Working Class Association*
5 Emperor Gardens, Greater Leys, Oxford, OX4 7WB.
☎ 07733 274324.

Scott Seamons – *Labour*
2 Orchard Court Rose Hill
Oxford OX4 4HJ
☎ 07910 595047
cllrsseamons@oxford.gov.uk

Oxfordshire County Council

Leys & Lye Division

Val Smith – *Labour*
4 Flaxfield Road, OX4 6QD
☎ 07767 446051
val.smith@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Richard Stevens – *Labour*
Flat 6 Eaton Court, Water Eaton Road, Oxford OX2 7QT
☎ 07725 353031
richard.stevens@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Member of Parliament

Member of Parliament for Oxford East

Andrew Smith – *Labour*
Unit A
Bishops Mews
Transport Way
Oxford OX4 6HD
☎ 01865 595790
andrewsmith.mp@virgin.net

Surgery: Every third Friday at the Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre from 3.00pm

PET HATES

BY ALAN WITTON

THERE'S MANY A SLIP!

WRITING this on the very day that our Queen achieves the 60th anniversary of her long reign, it seems only right that we should be allowed to blow our trumpet about all the successful achievements of our nation during that time. We had a half share in building the Channel Tunnel, the first fixed link between Britain and mainland Europe since the last Ice Age. Most recently, the buildings for the 2012 Olympics are now up, virtually ready for occupation, on budget and on time. I could go on, but won't.

Because there is one matter in which we have no right to hold our heads up in the company of civilised nations. We are famously, even monumentally, bad at clearing snow and ice off roads.

It seems only yesterday (actually it was more like last week as I write) that the local Councils were proudly showing off fleets of gleaming snow ploughs and gritters, and Alpine piles of rock salt and grit, to the admiring media. "We're well prepared this time" they crowed.

How wrong they were. Because all that expensive kit is no good at all while it stays within the gates of a Council depot. It needs to be taken out onto the roads, at exactly the right moment, and the grit spread on the surface, to have any chance at all of avoiding chaos. And that's what we're so bad at.

As it happens, I had a front-row seat to admire the chaos that occurred on Saturday night, 4 February. My companion and I were in London. It is my misfortune (and hers) that she is a compulsive shopaholic.

At about 7pm she finally pronounced herself ready to return home. By then snow had started falling in London, and I knew that by then it would be several inches deep in Oxford. We made our way to Victoria Coach Station, missed one coach by a whisker, the next one was cancelled, and by 9.30pm we were on our way (or so we thought). How wrong we were.

IMPASSABLE JAM

The driver took us carefully through the London suburbs and after Acton or thereabouts there was no black-top to be seen; it was all solid white as far as the eye could see. Conditions got even worse as we climbed out of London into the Chilterns.

Finally, as we were (I now calculate) a few miles short of Stokenchurch, we came up against an impassable jam, three lanes all solidly blocked with stationary traffic. Give or take a couple of hundred yards' cautious slither from time to time ("Look! There's a different tree!" we would encourage each other), there we stayed for an hour and a half. And we were probably lucky to get away with such a short delay.

It later turned out that the Police, who were generally conspicuous by their absence throughout, had closed the M40 at the Stokenchurch turn-off. However they don't seem to have done anything to inform the hundreds of road users of that fact. So there we stayed.

Only one gritter was to be seen; it was creeping up behind us, desperate to reach the front of the queue so it could do some useful work. A gritter is not a small vehicle, and of course it couldn't squeeze between a continental juggernaut on one side and a big coach on the other. At least its presence showed willing – if not able.

Finally, and as if by magic, the vast queue dissolved and we were on our way again. Carefully descending Stokenchurch hill, we noticed that as we entered Oxfordshire the blacktop and cats-eyes became visible again. I may be wrong, but I suggest that this means that our not-always-wonderful Oxfordshire County Council was slightly more on top of the job than their neighbours in Bucks.

PRAISE

I have nothing but praise for the coach driver, who admitted on arriving in Oxford that he had never seen conditions like it in all his years of driving. I think they should award him the VC – "Valiant Coach Driver"! But it would have been better if he had not had such a challenge to face. How did the bus company reward him? That's right – they told him to do another trip, to Gatwick and back!

THE TETCHY TEEN

Physical Education

By Ross Arrowsmith

IN THE winter the frosts blanket everything. Teenagers are herded in the direction of the football fields, clad with shorts and polo shirts. Goose bumps stroll up your arm. The cold air clings around your shins. The tops of your ears no longer exist. The games teacher bounces enthusiastically past in his nice warm jogging bottoms, with his thick winter coat.

"Come on everybody, we can have a nice jog to warm everyone up!" He says to everyone, before hurrying to the front of the herd. The Physical Education lovers are right at the front, excited about a game of football. My friends and I, at least some, grumble at the thought.

Everyone eventually arrives at the field. Reluctantly most people manage a light jog, and then break back into a walk to shiver at the cold. You finally get into the game of football, and then while slung back in defence, you are shouted at to intercept the ball. The day dreamed thoughts of a hot chocolate flee your mind and you find the effort to advance a few steps towards it.

Then you fall over in the mud. Sighing inwardly, you manage to get up, to find everyone moaning at the enemy team scoring. You curse under your breath and wait for the end of the lesson. The moment comes - the P.E teacher tells everyone to pack up, and off you go! Suddenly the fastest guy alive you can't wait to get back into those school clothes! First back into the changing room and on they go. Warmth. Beautiful warmth. At least you can get away without much effort in PE! I suppose it just has to resonate to you as a person.

In terms of school, I don't actually enjoy many subjects. But I certainly love what I like and hate what I don't. I could explain to somebody for hours the things I enjoy in life. It's just that P.E requires effort, and that isn't a thing a lot of other teenagers are good with (I'm sure many would agree!) But on the positive, it makes P.E haters appreciate a nice cup of tea, and possibly even the next lesson. If it's science, you can get away with a good nap!

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☎ 01865 775849

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☎ 01865 402050

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3 Courtlands Rd, Rose Hill, OX4 4HS
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34 Cowley Rd, Littlemore OX4 4LD
☎ 01865 425630

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174 Cowley Road, OX4 6NQ
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What's on in the Leys

A quick guide to what's available locally. If you have a service or event you'd like to include, please ring 01865 711756.

ADVICE

Agnes Smith Advice Centre
Gives free independent and impartial advice.
Drop-in sessions are in the centre on Mondays 2.00–4.00pm and Fridays 10.00am–12.00pm.
Also in the Farmhouse on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 10am–12pm.
☎ 01865 770206

CHILDREN

Teenage Rounders Class
Tuesdays, 4.00–5.00pm
£1.20.
For 14–18 year olds
Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre

Breastfeeding Café
Mondays, 1.00pm – 2.00pm at Leys Children's Centre, Cuddesdon Corner.
☎ Camille, 0789 995 8316

Blackbird Leys Youth Centre
Blackbird Leys Road. Variety of activities & advice for young people. ☎ 01865 772886.

Brownies: Thursdays, Holy Family Church Hall.
☎ Jennifer Pleass 07886 757338.

Dovecote Afterschool Club
Mondays – Thursdays, 3.15pm – 5.00pm, £1.30 per session.
☎ 01865 712299

Maluchy group for Polish speaking families with children ages 0 to 5 years. Saturday, 10.00am – 11.30am, at Pegasus School.
☎ Agata, 07874 187 704

35th Oxford Scout Group
☎ Duncan Bowler, 0776 6293353
duncan@35thoxford.com

Leys Kiddie Club
Mon, Tue, Thur and Fri, 9.30am–2.30pm, at Dovecote Family Drop-in Room. £1.

Strawbery Fayre Majorettes
Training every Wednesday at the Barn in Nightingale Avenue, Greater Leys, 7- 9.15pm.
Taking on new members any tme of the year.
☎ Eleen Filer 01865 717781

Oxfordshire (The Rifles) Battalion Army Cadet Force
Thursdays, 7.30–9.30p at Sandy Lane West. Boys and girls ages 13 to 18.
☎ 01869 259681

Rainbows
For girls aged 5 to 7. Fridays during term time, 5.30–6.30pm, at the Holy Family Church Hall on Cuddesdon Way.
☎ Laura Turner, 07787 528120

EDUCATION

Able Centre
Free courses in Maths and English. ☎ 776334

Blitz IT Courses
IT for beginners, internet, email, file management, PC maintenance and more.
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Blackbird Leys Library
Cuddesdon Way, Opposite Top Shops.

Books, DVDs, audio books, use of computers for adults and children, photocopying, reading group, holiday activities.

Opening times
Mon, Wed, Thur: 9am – 12pm and 1.30 – 5pm
Tue: 9am – 12pm
Sat: 9.30am – 12.30pm
Friday Closed

LEISURE

Irish dancing. Sacred Heart Hall. Weds & Thurs, 5pm.

Boxing Club.
Tues & Thurs 7.30–9.00pm, at Youth Centre, Blackbird Leys Road.
☎ Tony Gibson, 432995.

BBL Leisure Centre
- Zumba,
Mondays, 10.30–11.30am
- Body Balance,
Tuesdays, 11.00–12.00pm
- Legs, Bums, Tums,
Wednesdays, 10.15–11.15am
- Body Pump,
Thursdays, 9.30–10.30am
- Pilates,
Thursdays, 10.30–11.30am
- Boxercise,
Fridays, 10.30–11.30am
- Overs 50s indoor cycling
Mondays, 11.30–12.15pm

☎ 01865 467020

Blackbird Leys Swimming Pool
Blackbird Leys Road.
General swimming times are
Mon & Fri 5.45–6.45pm.
Sat & Sun 11.15am–1.00pm, and 1.30–2.30pm
Prime Time for over 50s:
Mon, 12–1.00pm;
Wed 11.30–12.30pm
Water Workout:
Tue and Fri, 12–1.00pm
Slimming World
Thurs, 12–1.00pm
☎ 01865 467040

OLDER PEOPLE

The Clockhouse
see box right

Prime Time Over 50s group, Wednesdays, 10.30am - 3.30pm, at Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre, Pegasus Road (£1.50). Keep fit, bingo, indoor bowls, speakers, activities and trips. ☎ 07534 740589

Golden Circle
☎ Bernard Tucker, 460592

NEW
SOCIAL EVENING
Come and meet new friends at the Clockhouse
Both men and women welcome.
Wednesday 28 March
7pm to 9pm
£2.00 each
(*includes refreshments*)
Further details from
Sally Meachim
01865 395908
or Pat Lemke
07722 232109
The Clockhouse,
Long ground,
Greater Leys OX4 7 FX

Silver Circle
☎ 435954 (Blackbird Leys Community Centre)

Monday lunch club
☎ Anne Appleton, 422231

Leys Community Church Over-60s Club
Wednesday afternoons.
☎ Keith Templar, 715815

Grandparents' "Stay & Play"
Bring your grandchildren to the Leys Childrens Centre drop-in, specially for grandparents.
Weds 1-3 pm at the Dovecote.

WELLBEING

The Listening Centre
A counselling service for Blackbird Leys and Oxford. Cuddesdon Corner Family Centre.
☎ 01865 794794

Slimming World
Thursdays, 5.15pm and 7.00pm, Leisure Centre, Pegasus Road.
☎ Gill, 01865 730009

Survivors
Fridays and Saturdays, Blackbird Leys Community Centre, 9.30am – 3.30pm. All welcome. A self-help group of people who use or have used Mental Health Services, working together to get support for, to share experiences and to press for greater awareness of the needs of survivors. Lunch available for £1. Pudding 50p. Breakfast from 50p. Card making. Table top sales.
☎ 07729 581975

Men's Group
Join us for regular end of day in a relaxed and friendly environment. Learn stress management tools and use this space to talk with other men and organise activities together.
Wednesdays, 5.30–8.00pm
Cowley Wellbeing Centre
26 Between Towns Road
Contact: Duncan / Lanre
07435 760 809
Or 01865 749998

Yoga For All
Experienced Yoga teacher, starting a new class.
Please call Linda Highland on 01865 432570

NETWORKING

Women's Community Business Network
Open to all women who have a business or are interested in finding out more about starting one, speaker plus networking. Second Tuesday of each month 7.30 - 9pm. Jack Argent room, Leys Community Centre. £3
☎ Katie, 01865 395960
womenscommunitybusiness@yahoo.co.uk
www.womens-business-network.co.uk

Leys WI
Meets at the Clockhouse on the first Wednesday of every month at 7.30pm.
☎ To find out more call Rachel Fisher on
07528 433199
www.theleyswi.moonfruit.com

CLOCKHOUSE
Community Centre

Long Ground, Greater Leys OX4 7FX.
☎ 01865 395908 **E:** clockhousecdi@btconnect.com

Over 50s advice
FREE monthly, confidential, advice on benefits, debt, housing and consumer issues. Outreach session at the Clockhouse, by Agnes Smith Advice Centre.
To book an appointment please tel: 395908.
Next date: Monday 26 March, 10am–12pm.

Games Club for over 50s
Monday mornings 10.30am to 12.30pm. Do you enjoy board games like scrabble and dominoes? Try this friendly club at the Clockhouse. "Keep fit" for your brain! £1. Drink/biscuits included.

Support group for carers
Are you providing care for an adult friend or loved one? Get together with other carers for friendship, advice-sharing and support. A Carers Oxfordshire worker is also on hand for advice and help. Next monthly meeting: Monday 19 March 2.00–3.30pm. FREE.

Line dancing for over 50s
Monthly dances. No partner needed, beginners very welcome. Good exercise, great fun! Monday 12 March. 1.30am–3.30 pm. £2

Yoga for over 50s
Seated/standing exercise, and relaxation. Improve your flexibility, feel calm and refreshed. Tuesdays, 10–11am. £2.

Singing for fun for over 50s.
No pressure, no reading music, just relax and enjoy singing in good company. Think you can't sing? – we bet you can! Tuesdays 1.30 to 3.30pm. FREE.

Crafts group for over 50s
Wednesdays, 11am–12.30pm. Bring your knitting, crochet, or sewing and have a natter. Beginners very welcome. Drink/biscuits included. £1

Tai chi for over 50s
Seated and standing exercise to help you get more supple, and boost your energy. Come and give it a try! Thursdays, 10–11am. £2

Gardening club.
Monthly meeting of SLIGO (Senior Leys Independent Gardening Organisation), first Thursday of each month, at 2pm. Thursday 1 March – Talk on Clematis by local specialist Mike Brown. £2 per meeting. Adults of ALL ages welcome.

Computer courses for over-50s
Learn at your own pace with the Clockhouse IT Project Group. Complete beginners very welcome. Learn how to improve your digital photography skills, or how to make DVDs and calendars. £1.

Evening activities group
Local people have started a "Clockhouse Activity Nights Group" (CLANG). Join the CLANGers at our friendly monthly socials. Meet others, relax, chat, and make new friends. ADULTS OF ALL AGES WELCOME! Next one: Wednesday 28 March Quiz Night. 7–9pm. £2, includes refreshments.
☎ 395908 for more details.

Our sessions are either low-cost or free, and all Leys over 50s are very welcome! Contact Sally Meachim on 01865 395908 for dates and details.

LOCAL CHURCHES

Redeem Christian Church of God
☎ 07825 679044 and 01865 766056

Meets at the Leisure Centre, Pegasus Road, Blackbird Leys.
Sunday Service: 3.00–6.00pm
Bible study on Fridays: 7.00–8.00pm, except the last Friday of the month.
www.RCCGLighthouse.co.uk

Leys Community Church
☎ Chipper and Hannah Betts, 07985 982804

Meets on Sundays, 3.30pm at the Church of the Holy Family. Meetings include special activities for children and young people.

Sacred Heart Catholic Church
Balfour Road, Blackbird Leys
☎ Church office, 01865 776903

Sunday Masses: 9.30am, with music and children's liturgy; and at 6.00pm.

Chrisco Ministries
Pastor Gitaua & Evangelist Mary Gitaua
☎ 07533 845714 and 07737 564677
Meets at Blackbird Leys Community Centre (Jack Agent Hall)
Sunday Service: 11am-2pm

The Church of the Holy Family
☎ *Rev Adam Stevenson, 01865 714163*

Eucharist: Every Sunday, 10am, with children's activities.
Timeout: Reflective evening worship. Most Sundays, 6.30pm.
Church Office Hour: Mondays (except bank holidays) at 6.30–7.30pm. For hall bookings, wedding arrangements and enquiries.
Fellowship for Bible: Study, discussion and prayer. Most Wednesdays at 7.30pm.
www.holyfamilybbl.co.uk

CALLING ALL SPORTSMEN AND WOMEN!

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JUMP TO IT!

THE Higher Energy Trampoline Club has around 200 members and operates out of several training sites covering the West of Oxfordshire, the City, including Oxford University, Bicester and Banbury, and now there are sessions available on the Leys.

The Club has been awarded the prestigious Club Mark certification and was voted Club of the Year by West Oxfordshire District Council in 2010. One of the coaches was a runner up at the Oxfordshire Sports Awards in the Inspirational Coaches category.

Fiona Middleton from the club, said: "Since then, we have continually developed playground to podium pathways for young people to engage in sport. We are extremely proud to work with several Government led sporting programmes such as Go Active, Go 4 it, Active woman, In it together, and the 5 x 30 Project to name a few. The Higher Energy Trampoline Club regularly competes on the regional circuit and in two academic years has won 11 regional gold medals, two silvers and a bronze with two girls ready to compete at national level this year."

Fiona added: "All of this has been achieved by the efforts of our dedicated committee members and coaching staff and we are confident we can produce equal standards at Blackbird Leys. Our instructors have coached novice to elite performers, from pre-school to adults for over 12, eight of which were working within schools and colleges during PE lessons. All our coaches have an advanced CRB check, registered with British Gymnastics, Southern Gymnastics and Oxfordshire Sports Partnership and have first aid qualifications."

The club currently runs trampoline sessions at the Fusion Leisure Centre as follows:

Mondays
4.15 – 5pm, ages 4 – 7
5.00 – 5.45pm, ages 8 – 11
5.45 – 6.30pm, ages 11 – 16
6.30 – 7.45pm, adults

Thursdays
10.30 – 11.30am, for mothers and toddlers

For more info please visit www.higher-energy-trampolineclub.com

Sport Relief comes to Oxford

START limbering up for the Sport Relief Mile, which is coming to Oxford on Sunday 25 March.

Setting off from Cutteslowe Park, the Oxford Mile will take in the sights of the beautiful Cutteslowe and Sunnymead Park and is set to be an incredible event. Entrants don't have to be sporty to take part, but can choose to complete one, three or six miles, knowing that all the money raised will help to change the lives of people living unimaginably tough lives right here on our doorstep, across the rest of the UK and in some the world's poorest countries.

In 2010, the Oxford Mile had 591 participants and raised an astonishing £20,723.31! This year the city wants to make the day even bigger and better – but your help is needed to do that. So come on the Leys, pull up your Sport Relief socks, enter the Mile, and do something amazing!

If you fancy going that extra mile, Oxford City Council is looking for volunteers to lend a helping hand on the day.

For more information on this fantastic volunteer opportunity or to register your interest visit www.do-it.org
or email: sportdevelopment@oxford.gov.uk
or call: 01865 252729

FUTURE FOOTY STARS NEEDED!

GREATER Leys Youth Football Club is looking for boys and girls aged 9 and 10 (school year 5) to join its existing under 10s team. The club trains on Wednesday evenings at the Oxford Academy in the new Dome between 6pm and 7pm.

If you require any further information, please contact Ian Fieldwick on 07557020355.

LADIES, are you looking to get fit, meet friends and have fun?

THE Active Women project has a number of fun and affordable sports sessions in and around the Leys, which are designed for beginners or those returning to something they once loved.

Netball sessions are held at Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre on Thursdays and Sundays, 5pm – 6pm. Sessions cost £3.20. Why not enjoy some well earned family time on Sunday and bring your daughter along too, costing just £5 for the both of you (must be aged ten or above).

There are also sessions at The Oxford Academy on Tuesdays, 8.30pm – 9.30pm, £3.50 per session.

If badminton is your sport then go along to the Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre on Tuesdays, 10am – 11am, £3.10 per session, Littlemore Community Centre on Wednesdays, 6pm – 8pm, £2.50 per session or The Oxford Academy on Thursdays, 7.30pm – 8.30pm, £3.50 per session.

There are trampolining sessions at Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre, including a Mother and Toddler Bounce (trampolining sessions for you and your tots) on Thursdays, 10.30am – 11.30am, £3.50 per session. Ladies only trampolining sessions are on Mondays, 6.30pm – 7.15pm, £5.60 per session.

A free women only jogging group meets on Wednesdays at 10am, at the Garden Cafe, Cowley Road.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

On Wednesday 8 March, there will be celebrations for International Women's Day at Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre. Join in the celebrations from 10am – 4pm and take part in a number of free taster sessions, including: Netball, Badminton, Futsal, Trampolining and family Street Cheer.

For more information please visit www.oxfordshiresport.org/activewomen or contact Natasha Mighty on Natasha.Mighty@fusion-lifestyle.com or 01865 467264

Oxford v. Cambridge Annual Judo Varsity Match

THE annual Judo Varsity Match will take place on Sunday 11 March, at the Oxford Town Hall.

The Oxford and Cambridge clubs are two of the oldest existing Judo clubs in Europe and the annual varsity match is believed to be the world's oldest regular Judo competition outside of Japan. This contest has taken place annually since 1930, with only a short break during the Second World War. The modern day varsity competition comprises four matches; two men's teams of eight – the Blues" and the "B"s and a women's team of five to represent each university. An additional mixed team of seven men and one woman represent Oxford and Cambridge City Judo Clubs, making this event a truly Town and Gown affair.

The event will take place between 1pm and 4pm.

Tickets (£5.00 for adults; £3.00 for students and concessions; £7.00 for front 2 rows) are available by emailing info@oxfordjudo.com. Remaining tickets will be available at the door.